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Letter dated 11 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I write with regard to my letter dated 30 March 2007, concerning the third report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

I should be grateful if you would have the content of that letter, of which a copy is enclosed herein, circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 11 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write with regard to the third report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2007/147).

Israel has examined and studied the report of the Secretary-General in depth, giving it the full and necessary attention. In this regard, I wish to raise with you a number of issues.

As the following letter details, Israel has identified three major areas of concern — the abducted Israeli soldiers, the arms embargo, and the situation south of the Litani.

Abducted Israeli soldiers

1. While paragraph 40 addresses the issue of "Lebanese citizens detained in Israel", it is our understanding that resolution 1701 (2006) only referred to the Hizbullah terrorists captured during the Second Lebanon War. The language in the report is not as clear as we had hoped.

2. Similarly, the lumping together in the report of the abducted Israeli soldiers and "captured Lebanese prisoners" into one issue inaccurately reflects the original intent of the resolution. Resolution 1701 (2006) calls for the unconditional release of the abducted Israeli soldiers and settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners in two different preparatory paragraphs, thus treating each as a separate and unrelated entity.

3. The heading for section II.F reads "Captured soldiers and prisoners". The Israeli soldiers, however, as the following paragraph correctly asserts, were abducted — not captured. Though the distinction may be subtle, precision is necessary in dealing with an issue of such great humanitarian consequence.

Embargo

4. The report does not adequately address the deep involvement of Iran and Syria in the unlawful transfer of arms and munitions to terrorist organizations in Lebanon — first and foremost Hizbullah — and in violating the embargo (section II.D). Beyond the reference to the information provided by Israel, many testimonies by Lebanese and others confirm the transfer of weapons and munitions from Syria to Lebanon. Unfortunately, these testimonies were not reflected in the report. Moreover, weapons are being passed to radical elements in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, which strengthens fundamentalist elements and challenges the sovereignty and endangers the stability of Lebanon. Israel considers enforcement of the weapons embargo a key issue, and as such would regard it as part of those listed in paragraph 2.

Situation north of the Litani

5. Israel appreciates the fact that the report makes reference to the situation north of the Litani (para. 24), but wishes to underscore the dangerous consequences a

strengthened Hizbullah in the areas has for the stability of Lebanon south of the Litani.

Situation south of the Litani

6. Israel notes the attention given to UNIFIL activity south of the Litani and the discovery of locations with "abandoned unauthorized arms, ammunition, or related material". However, it also wishes to emphasize Hizbullah's continued activity in this area in blatant violation of resolution 1701 (2006). This activity by an armed Hizbullah includes but is not limited to the use of closed operational areas, stockpiling of weapons and missiles, and reconnaissance activities on IDF and UNIFIL forces, conducted and carried out from within the civilian infrastructure. The lack of sufficient UNIFIL attention to these dangerous phenomena is a cause for grave concern.

Hizbullah's armed presence in the areas south of the Litani is no secret. Israel has repeatedly warned of Hizbullah's rearming and the danger posed to the region. As the report notes, Hassan Nasrallah has even publicly proclaimed, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006), Hizbullah's intention to move munitions to the "front". Attention should not be limited to Nasrallah's pronouncements only. While UNIFIL has done a great deal in the area south of the Litani, continued Hizbullah violations indicate the need for intensified efforts in order to fully implement the resolution and bring stability and security. Israel urges the Security Council to address this escalating matter accordingly.

Disarming of armed groups

7. The dismantling of armed groups in Lebanon remains a crucial element in the stabilizing of Lebanon, and will contribute greatly to the achievement of a long-term solution between Israel and Lebanon. Though three years have passed since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), its full implementation, particularly via the internal political process in Lebanon, remains unfulfilled. Concrete benchmarks should be created to encourage movement along this front. In this context as well, it should be pointed out that Israel considers the disarming of armed groups to be among the key issues enumerated in paragraph 2.

"Shab'a Farms"

8. The issues pertaining to the so-called "Shab'a Farms" are between Syria and Lebanon. Echoing the report, Israel also wishes to underscore the importance of the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1680 (2006). As to the cartographer's mandate, Israel would like to stress that it is limited to defining the area geographically, and not part of the process of delineating a "boundary", as might be suggested from paragraph 50.

Ghajar

9. The report calls on Israel and Lebanon to approve the agreement for the temporary security arrangement in Ghajar (para. 60). Israel wishes to point out, as reported in paragraph 12, that the arrangements were already endorsed by Israel, and it awaits the approval of the Government of Lebanon.

Overflights

10. Israel is working to reduce the number of overflights. In the light of the continued violations of the embargo on the transfer of arms and the continued detention of the abducted Israeli soldiers, these flights are an essential security measure for Israel. It is well known that these flights provide important intelligence with regard to the violations of resolution 1701 (2006). Israel hopes that in time these overflights will not be necessary.

I wish to underscore that these concerns are not merely expository thoughts on language. Rather, they address the very core of the obligations set forth by resolution 1701 (2006), and the manner in which outstanding aspects of the resolution will be implemented.

Israel is committed to seeing forth the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), emphasizing the aforementioned humanitarian situation of the abducted Israeli soldiers, Udi Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, the situation south of the Litani, and the arms embargo, as our previous letters to you over the past eight months have repeatedly confirmed.

I should be grateful if you would have the content of this letter circulated to the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.